



Public Health
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Region IV Public Health
Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum counties
and Cowlitz Tribe

Health Advisory

Please deliver a copy of the accompanying alert to each provider in your organization.

Thank you

**Questions regarding this alert may be
directed to the office of:**

Alan Melnick, MD, MPH
Health Officer

Jennifer Vines, MD, MPH
Deputy Health Officer

Clark County Public Health
Cowlitz County Health Department
Skamania County Health Department
Wahkiakum County Department of Health and Human Services
(360) 397-8412
Please Distribute

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for specific incident for situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.



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HEALTH Advisory

May 13, 2011

TO: Physicians and Other Health Care Providers

FROM: Alan Melnick, MD, MPH, CPH, Health Officer
Jennifer Vines, MD, MPH, Deputy Health Officer

RE: PERTUSSIS EXPOSURE

Clark County Public Health is investigating a case of pertussis in a school aged child. The case attended:

- Hockinson Elementary School on April 20 and April 21, 2011.
- Old Apostolic Lutheran Church on April 3, April 10 and April 17, 2011 - the 10am service in the south building.
- Old Apostolic Lutheran Church meetings held at the Clark County Convention Center on April 22, 2011 at 11am and 6pm; on April 24 at 11am; and on April 25 at 11am and 6pm.

Please find two attached letters. One was distributed at the church earlier this week, notifying the congregation that they may have been exposed to pertussis. The other was distributed to parents of the children in a classroom attended by the index case. We have removed reference to the specific classroom to protect the privacy of the child.

Exposed persons at increased risk for pertussis complications, specifically infants younger than one-year and pregnant women, especially women in the third trimester of pregnancy, should receive antibiotics to lower the risk of becoming ill. In addition, exposed persons who live with or work with infants and pregnant women, should receive antibiotics.

Please consider pertussis in your differential diagnosis in patients with symptoms consistent with pertussis infection and in particular if they attended church services or the school described above. See the attached antimicrobial treatment and post exposure prophylaxis guidelines.

Early symptoms can last for 1 to 2 weeks and may include:

- Runny nose
- Low-grade fever (generally minimal throughout the course of the disease)
- Mild, occasional cough

As the disease progresses, the classic and more severe symptoms of pertussis can appear and include:

- Paroxysms (fits) of many, rapid coughs followed by a high-pitched "whoop"
- Vomiting

In addition, we are asking that you take every opportunity to urge patients, adults and children, to update their pertussis vaccinations.

Please call your local health jurisdiction to report suspected or confirmed pertussis. To report notifiable conditions or if you have questions, please call:

- Clark County Public Health: (360) 397-8182.
- Cowlitz County Health Department: (360) 414-5599
- Skamania County Community Health: (509) 427-3850
- Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services (360) 795-6207

Table 1: Recommended antimicrobial treatment and postexposure prophylaxis for pertussis, by age group

Age group	Primary agents			Alternate agent*
	Azithromycin	Erythromycin	Clarithromycin	TMP-SMZ
Under 1 month	Recommended agent. 10 mg/kg per day in a single dose for 5 days (only limited safety data available.)	Not preferred. Erythromycin is associated with infantile hypertrophic pyloric stenosis. Use if azithromycin is unavailable; 40–50 mg/kg per day in 4 divided doses for 14 days	Not recommended (safety data unavailable)	Contraindicated for infants aged < 2 months (risk for kernicterus)
1–5 months	10 mg/kg per day in a single dose for 5 days	40–50 mg/kg per day in 4 divided doses for 14 days	15 mg/kg per day in 2 divided doses for 7 days	Contraindicated at age < 2 months. For infants aged ≥ 2 months, TMP 8 mg/kg per day, SMZ 40 mg/kg per day in 2 divided doses for 14 days
Infants (6 months and older) and children	10 mg/kg in a single dose on day 1 (maximum: 500 mg/day) then 5 mg/kg per day on days 2–5 (maximum: 250 mg/day)	40–50 mg/kg per day (maximum: 2 g per day) in 4 divided doses for 14 days	15 mg/kg per day in 2 divided doses (maximum: 1 g per day) for 7 days	TMP 8 mg/kg per day, SMZ 40 mg/kg per day in 2 divided doses for 14 days (maximum: adult dose)
Adults	500 mg in a single dose on day 1 then 250 mg per day on days 2–5	2 g per day in 4 divided doses for 14 days	1 g per day in 2 divided doses for 7 days Pregnancy category C	TMP 320 mg per day, SMZ 1,600 mg per day in 2 divided doses for 14 days Pregnancy category C

* Trimethoprim sulfamethoxazole (TMP-SMZ) can be used as an alternative agents to macrolides in patients aged ≥ 2 months who are allergic to macrolides, who cannot tolerate macrolides, or who are infected with a rare macrolide-resistant strain of *B. pertussis*.

Source: MMWR 2005;54:RR-14



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CLARK COUNTY
WASHINGTON

Public Health
1601 E. Fourth Plain Blvd.
P. O. Box 9825
Vancouver, WA 98666-8825
(360) 397-8000

May 4, 2011

Dear Church Member,

We are writing to let you know that there was a case of pertussis (whooping cough) in a child who attended:

- The 10am service in the south building of the Old Apostolic Lutheran Church on April 3, April 10 and April 17.
- The Old Apostolic Lutheran Church meetings held at the Clark County Convention Center on April 22 at 11am and 6pm, on April 24 at 11am and on April 25 at 11am and 6pm.

You and/or your family may have been exposed to the ill child if you were in the south building of the church at the dates and times listed above, or at the convention center meetings on the dates and times above.

Pertussis is a highly contagious disease that is spread through the air by coughing. Pertussis usually begins with cold-like symptoms and a cough that worsens over 1-2 weeks. Symptoms may include coughing “fits” followed by a “whooping” noise, vomiting, cyanosis (turning blue) or the inability to catch one’s breath. The cough is often worse at night and cough medicines usually do not help eliminate the cough. Usually, persons infected with pertussis do not have a fever.

Adults and children may catch pertussis, **even if they have had all or some of their immunizations (DTaP).** In older children and adults the symptoms may be only a persistent cough which is worse at night. This illness is often very severe in small infants.

Persons who are exposed to pertussis can lower the risk of becoming ill by taking antibiotics prescribed by their health care provider. Persons who are already ill after being exposed to someone with pertussis can take antibiotics to recover more quickly and to reduce the risk of spreading pertussis to others.

Clark County Public Health Recommendations:

Persons who were in the Old Apostolic Lutheran Church’s south building for the 10am service on Sunday April 3, Sunday April 10, or Sunday April 17 may have been exposed to pertussis. In addition, persons who were at the Old Apostolic Lutheran Church meetings at the Clark County Convention Center on April 22 at 11am and 6pm, on April 24 at 11am and on April 25 at 11am and 6p may have been exposed to pertussis.

1. If you or your child were exposed as described above and developed a cold or coughing illness at any time since the beginning of April and the symptoms are still present it is important for you to be evaluated ***promptly*** by your doctor for pertussis infection.
2. If you have a child under the age of 1 year who was exposed as described above please speak with your doctor about getting antibiotics for your child even if your child does not have any cold symptoms. This is done to prevent an exposed person from developing the illness. These antibiotics must be taken as soon as possible after exposure.
3. If you are a woman in the third trimester of pregnancy and were exposed as described above please speak with your doctor about getting antibiotics for yourself to prevent the development of illness even if you do not have any cold symptoms. These antibiotics must be taken as soon as possible after exposure.
4. We also recommend all others who were exposed to seek medical advice about receiving antibiotics to prevent illness.
5. If you see your doctor for any of the reasons listed above please show this letter to your doctor at your visit.
6. Please make sure that you are current on all of your pertussis vaccinations whether or not you were exposed to the ill child. Pertussis vaccines are recommended for both children and adults.

If you have questions please call, your health care provider or the Clark County Public Health at (360) 397-8182. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Clark County Public Health Officer



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CLARK COUNTY
WASHINGTON

Public Health
1601 E. Fourth Plain Blvd.
P. O. Box 9825
Vancouver, WA 98666-8825
(360) 397-8000

Date: May 4, 2011
To: Parents of Children in xxx Classroom
From: Dr. Alan Melnick, Health Officer
Re: Pertussis cases

We are writing to let you know that there have been several cases of pertussis (whooping cough) in the community including one case in your child's classroom.

Pertussis is a highly contagious disease that is spread through the air by coughing. Pertussis usually begins with cold-like symptoms and a cough that worsens over 1-2 weeks. Symptoms may include coughing "fits" followed by a "whooping" noise, vomiting, cyanosis (turning blue) or the inability to catch one's breath. The cough is often worse at night and cough medicines usually do not help eliminate the cough. Usually, persons infected with pertussis do not have a fever. In older children and adults the symptoms may be only a persistent cough which is worse at night. This illness is often very severe in small infants.

Although adults and children may catch pertussis, even if they have had all or some of their immunizations (DTaP), **vaccination against pertussis is still one of the best ways of reducing the risk of getting this disease.** Clark County Public Health encourages parents to take this opportunity to ensure their children are up-to-date with vaccinations that protect against pertussis and other diseases.

If you have questions about pertussis or recommended childhood vaccinations, please call, your health care provider or the Clark County Public Health Department at (360) 397-8182 and thank you for your attention.